



Natalia Alward <alwardn@graffton-ma.gov>

[Town of Grafton MA] 244 Worcester St - Public Comment (Sent by Sara Nelson, smnelson24@gmail.com)

Contact form at Town of Grafton MA <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>

Sun, Mar 13, 2022 at 9:09 PM

Reply-To: smnelson24@gmail.com

To: planningdept@graffton-ma.gov

Hello Planning Department,

Sara Nelson (smnelson24@gmail.com) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.graffton-ma.gov/user/14766/contact>) at Town of Grafton MA.

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Message:

Hello,

I have been recently made aware of the proposed construction of a warehouse at [244 Worcester St](#). I strongly believe this would be extremely unfortunate for the entire Town of Grafton. This site is the first thing anyone sees when they drive into Grafton on Rt 122 from Millbury. Building this enormous facility will essentially be like erecting a 40-foot tall and 0.25-mile long concrete wall to welcome all to the Town. In addition to the increase in traffic, the warehouse will completely destroy the Town character and degrade the Town's desirability as a whole. These are just a few of the many reasons that allowing the construction of this facility would be a shame for the entire community. Attached you will find a list of Zoning By-law sections I have highlighted which were created in part to deter the construction of such facilities. Please review my comments, as I plan to discuss these at the public hearing on March 14th.

Kind regards,
Sara

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244 Worcester Street Grafton, MA Development

Zoning Bylaws:

1. 1.5.5 Conditions for Granting Specials Permits:

- a. *“Special Permits may be granted only for uses which are in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this By-Law. The special permit granting authority shall deny an application for a special permit when it determines that a nuisance, hazard, or congestion will be created, or for any other reason there will be substantial harm to the neighborhood or a derogation from the general purpose and the intent of the By-Law, or where the special permit is determined not to be in the public interest, or that the stated district objectives or applicable use criteria will not be satisfied. The special permit granting authority shall make findings on which to base its determination on the specific issues of:*
 - a. *Ingress and egress to property and proposed structures thereon with particular reference to automotive and pedestrian safety and convenience, traffic flow and control and access in case of fire or catastrophe.*
 - b. *Off-street parking and loading areas where required, with particular attention to the items in paragraph (a) above, and the economic, noise, glare, or odor effects of the special permit on adjoining properties and properties generally in the district.*
 - c. *Refuse collection or disposal and services areas, with particular reference to items in paragraphs (a) and (b) above.*
 - d. *Screening and buffering with reference to type, dimensions and character.*
 - e. *Signs, if any, and proposed exterior lighting with reference to glare, traffic safety, economic effect, and compatibility and harmony with properties in the district.*
 - f. *Required yards and other open space; and*
 - g. *General compatibility with adjacent properties and other property in the district.*
 - h. *There will not be any significant adverse impact on any public or private water supply.*
 - i. *If the subject site is located within the Water Supply Protection Overlay District, there will not be any significant or cumulative impact upon municipal water supplies, and the Board shall give appropriate consideration to contamination by nitrate-nitrogen loading in making this determination. (T.M. 10-28-86)*
 - j. *Protect important historic, cultural and scenic landscapes. (TM 10-18-99)”*
 - i. The local community does believe the construction of this facility is in the public interest for many reasons, including but not limited to, increased traffic, regular noise, decreased safety for pedestrians and cyclists, air quality, character of the town, the natural environment in the surrounding area, neighborhood appeal, and many more.
 - ii. This facility will create regular noise from truck traffic in excess of what is currently expected. Emissions from the constant truck traffic and loading may impact odors and air quality.

- iii. Will there be any new signs/lights for the facility? If so, how will they impact the neighborhood? Lights could become a nuisance to adjoining properties in the evening.

2. **3.1.5 Districts Intents and Purposes:**

- a. 3.1.5.8 Industrial (I): *“To provide sites for industry which create employment opportunities and maximizes the use of Grafton's access and environmental conditions and labor force, while recognizing the limitations of Grafton to handle traffic, water runoff, sewage, and other environmental and neighborhood impacts. The above purposes are, however, mitigated by the overriding goal of protecting the town's ground water resources.”*
 - i. Negative impacts to the neighborhood include environmental, existing character, noise, air pollution, increased littering, increased traffic, decreased safety for pedestrians/cyclists – all of which lead to decreased property values, quality of life, and overall desirability to reside in/visit the Town of Grafton.

3. **3.2.3.2 Intensity of Use Schedule**

a.

	Zoning District	Minimum Area (sq. ft)	Minimum Frontage/Lot Width (ft)	Minimum Yards			Maximum Building Coverage (% of Lot)	Maximum Building Height (feet)
				Front (ft)	Side (ft)	Rear (ft)		
By-Law	Industrial	40,000	120	40	35	35	40	35
Proposed	Industrial	1,141,272	2,390	50	247	137	~33%	36

Note: This table was summarized from Zoning Bylaws section 4.2.4.2 and information provided on the updated site plans 12/17/21.

- i. Where is there special permit for exceeding height restrictions? Does this height include any HVAC, parapet, or anything else that may increase the overall height of the structure?

4. **4.2.4 Other Requirements:**

- a. *“4.2.4.2 No street access drive for parking areas containing six (6) or more spaces or a loading area shall exceed 30 feet in width at the street line. The minimum distance between the sidelines of such drives and the sidelines of any intersecting street or any other street access drive, measured between where such street and driveway sidelines intersect the adjacent street line shall be as follows:”*

	From Intersecting Streets	From other Drives
Drivers serving other permitted principal structures in an: Industrial District	50'	150'

Note: This table was summarized from Zoning Bylaws section 4.2.4.2.

- i. How wide is the drive at the intersection onto Worcester St? Both drives are designed for 38'+ for the lanes plus a 45-degree radius onto the road
- ii. New west drive will be within 150' of Hilltop St (only ~75'). If this includes residential driveways, there are about 6 driveways within 150' on the south side of Worcester St.

5. **4.3.2 Objectives:**

- a. *"The objectives for allowing Major Complexes are to increase the diversity and convenience of goods and services available in Grafton to provide entrepreneurial and employment opportunities for area residents, to focus development at locations able to support it with relatively small environmental or municipal cost, and to protect the town's natural environment, existing character and development, and ability to provide public services."*
 - i. This project will certainly adversely affect the natural environment and existing character of the Town and cause unnecessary nuisances for the entire neighborhood and all regular commuters on this section of Rt 122.

6. **4.3.4 Decision Criteria:**

- a. *"The Complex shall be so designated and located that annual average daily traffic is not increased 50% or more above current levels at any point more than 1,000 feet from a state highway intersection, with current levels being as determined by the Grafton Planning Board at developer's expense; and shall be so located that resultant traffic is not above the capacity of roads and intersections for level of service "C" at any point within 1 mile of the premises using definitions and methods of estimation as outlined by the Highway Research Board Highway Capacity Manual, 1965 or later editions. (T.M. 10-28-86)"*
 - i. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a decrease in travel which may be indicative of future traffic patterns. Although there has been an increase in traffic in over the past 12-24 months, the formerly assumed 1% annual growth rate based on 2018 traffic may not actually be applicable as more people work from home, get deliveries, etc.
 - ii. The warehouse is expected to generate 638 new vehicle trips per weekday. How are these assumptions made if there is yet to be a decision for what the exactly the warehouse should be used? Also, do the "truck trips" account for tractor trailers AND box trucks, etc.?
- b. *"Site design and storm water facilities shall be so designed that in a 50-year storm the peak stormwater flows leaving the premises will not be increased more than 10% above current flows or cause design capacity of receiving structures or channel capacity of receiving streams to be exceeded."*
 - i. Stormwater Management Report analyzed 1-year, 2-year, 10-year, 25-year, and 100-year storms but not 50-year.